

Grade 2

Informative/Explanatory Writing: Using Text Features

Instructional Unit Resource for the
*South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards for
English Language Arts*

South Carolina Department of Education
Office of Standards and Learning
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Grade 2: Informational/Explanatory Writing: Using Text Features

Unit Rationale/Overview: In this unit, students will navigate informational text features as a reader and a writer. Its purpose is to explore common features in informational text in order to write an informational piece more effectively.

Second Grade offers a prime opportunity in a student's development to build a strong foundation in reading by modeling complex reading and writing behaviors. The second grade reading standards are rigorous and require teachers to read aloud and demonstrate how authors use words, phrases, illustrations, and photographs to inform, explain, or describe a topic. Students will be introduced to new text features such as index, headings, bullets, and captions and will learn to use the text features to locate and describe key facts or information. This skill will help them in subsequent years as they identify text features. They will use the text features to locate information and gain meaning from the text. Students will be in various places on the developmental writing continuum. Accordingly, teachers should provide numerous opportunities for students to explore print and multimedia sources so they can write informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic, support the topic with evidence, and provide a conclusion.

The teacher's modeling of writing strategies, using his or her own writing and thinking aloud about the writing, is crucial to the implementation of this unit in terms of drafting, demonstrating craft, and revision. The teacher will serve as an expert writer, who both models and writes with children as she or he instructs them in the writing process.

Through collaboration, analysis of informational texts, and writing, students will learn skills that will help them develop the world class skills listed in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.

<http://ed.sc.gov/scdoe/assets/File/newsroom/Profile-of-the-South-Carolina-Graduate.pdf>

Estimated time frame: two to three weeks.

Standards and Indicators

Targeted implies that these standards are the focus of the unit.

Embedded implies that these standards will be naturally integrated throughout the units.

Targeted Standards/Indicators

Writing

2.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- 2.W.2.1 Explore print and multimedia sources to write informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.
- 2.W.2.2 Plan, revise, and edit, focusing on a topic while building on personal ideas and the ideas of others to strengthen writing.

Reading- Informational Text

- 2.RI.8 Interpret and analyze the author’s use of words, phrases, text features, conventions, and structures, and how their relationships shape meaning and tone in print and multimedia texts.**
- 2.RI.8.1 Identify words, phrases, illustrations, and photographs used to provide information.
- 2.RI.8.2 Use an index, headings, bullets, and captions to locate key facts and information; explain the relationship between these features and the text.

Embedded Standards/Indicators

Inquiry-Based Literacy

- 2.I.2 Transact with texts to formulate questions, propose explanations, and consider alternative views and multiple perspectives.**
- 2.I.2.1 Engage in daily explorations of texts to make connections to personal experiences, other texts, or the environment.
- 2.I.3 Construct knowledge, applying disciplinary concepts and tools, to build deeper understanding of the world through exploration, collaboration, and analysis.**
- 2.I.3.2 Select the most important information, revise ideas, and record and communicate findings.
- 2.I.4 Synthesize information to share learning and/or take action.**
- 2.I.4.1 Draw conclusions from relationships and patterns discovered during the inquiry process.

Communication

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| 2.C.3 | Communicate information through strategic use of multiple modalities and multimedia to enrich understanding when presenting ideas and information. |
| 2.C.3.1 | Explore and compare how ideas and topics are depicted in a variety of media and formats. |

Clarifying Notes and “I Can” Statements

The suggested strategies are meant to increase students’ ability to write an informational piece through process writing, while weaving in reading informational standards and indicators.

The strategies listed within this unit can be taught within Writer’s Workshop. When Writer’s Workshop is integrated with reading, students interpret meaning in a more authentic way. The components of Writer’s Workshop are read aloud/mentor texts, mini-lessons, independent writing, conferring, guided writing, and sharing/publishing.

Teaching Elementary Students to be Effective Writers provides evidence –based recommendations for addressing writing for instructional practices. Those recommendations include the following:

1. Provide daily time for students to write.
2. Teach students the writing process.
3. Teach students to write for a variety of purposes.
4. Teach students to become fluent with handwriting, spelling, sentence construction, typing, and word processing.
5. Create an engaged community of writers. (Institute of Education Sciences, 2012)

For more information: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/writing_pg_062612.pdf

Encourage students to read like a writer and have collaborative conversations through “Turn and Talk.”

Teaching Tips:

- Before you begin, model “turn and talk” with another adult or student. Emphasize the importance of having a two-way conversation with one person speaking at a time. Assign students a “turn and talk” partner or small group.
- During read aloud, stop several times at natural breaking points and pose queries for students to “turn and talk” about, asking the following:
- Where do you think this author got his/her ideas for this book?
- Listen to this! Let me reread the beginning of this book. Did the lead make you want to read the story?
- Did you hear any words that you want to remember and use in your writing?
- Can you picture this setting/character/event in your mind? How did the author help you do that? What words did the author use?
- How did the author make the sentences flow?
- Does this writing have voice? (Routman 2003)

Reminders:

- Students should begin using the words “story” and “text” interchangeably.
- Anchor charts are visual references that are used as a tool for students to receive ongoing support as they develop in their understanding. Ideally, anchor charts are made with students and may be displayed as needed or determined by the student work.

The Fundamentals of Writing (K-12)

The Fundamentals of Writing provides the classroom structure for a writing community, using a workshop approach. Students learn the recursive process of writing, act as collaborators of writing with their teacher and peers in the writing workshop, produce clear and coherent writing, and incorporate author’s craft techniques in their work. *Fundamentals of Writing* are designed for students in K-12, therefore, these are on-going expectations for English Language Arts classrooms. You may find the *Fundamentals of Writing* in the SCCR Standards document. <http://ed.sc.gov/scdoe/assets/File/instruction/standards/ELA/ELA%20Standards/Fundamentals%202015%20Process.pdf>

Shared Writing

Shared writing provides the teacher the opportunity to model the writing process with input from the students. The teacher leads the students through the planning process, adding support as needed. Once a plan has been developed, the teacher will draft, revise, edit and complete the writing, using the ideas of the students. The teacher may revise some of the language conventions as she or he writes. While writing, the teacher may have the students turn and talk to their preassigned writing partner about an idea which is causing differences of opinion. The group then comes back together to continue the discussion and come to some type of agreement or compromise.

Anchor Charts

Anchor charts are large charts created by the teacher and the students during a whole class or small group mini-lesson. The chart is posted in a prominent place where it becomes a record of the strategies or procedures learned and can be used as a reference. As a reference, anchor charts scaffold students’ thinking, helping students to become less reliant on the teacher. As additional information is learned, either the teacher or the students can add it to the chart.

Mentor Text (Ray, 2002)

A mentor text should be a text that the students are familiar with from prior experiences. In her book *What You know By Heart*, Katie Wood Ray says that mentor texts become our coaches and our writing teachers. They provide opportunities for students to see what kinds of writers they can become as they imitate the text and continue to find ways to grow. When a student learns to write from a mentor text, the teacher should provide multiple mentor texts. For this reason, more than one possible mentor text is listed in this unit. Teachers can save student examples to be used in the future. Teachers may want to collaborate with grade level colleagues to build a collection of these writings.

“I Can” Statements

“I Can” statements are learning targets of what students need to know and accomplish as related to the standards/indicators.

Writing:

- I can write informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic, supply supporting for the topic, and provide a concluding statement or section. (2.W.2.1)
- I can plan, revise, and edit my writing and strengthen writing based on the ideas of others. (2.W.2.2)

Reading Informational Text:

- I can identify words and phrases used to provide information in a variety of texts. (2.RI.8.1)
- I can explain how an author uses illustrations and photographs to help a reader learn new information. (2.RI.8.1)
- I can use an index, heading, bullets and captions to locate key facts and information. (2.RI.8.2)
- I can explain how text features help me understand how they relate to the text. (2.RI.8.2)

Essential Questions

These are **suggested** essential questions that will help guide student inquiry.

- What are characteristics of informational text?
- What are some text features in informational books?
- What is the purpose of text features?
- Why are text features important to the reader?
- What do good writers do to help others learn something new?
- How do writers write to inform, explain and describe events to others?
- How can good writers make their writing better?

Academic Vocabulary

Some students may need extra support with the following academic vocabulary. Teaching vocabulary in an instructional context is recommended rather than teaching in isolation. An appropriate time to deliver explicit instruction would be during the modeling process.

definition

inform

explain

describe
index
headings
bullets
captions
revise
edit
text features
illustration
photograph
glossary
table of contents
title page
font
informative text
topic

Prior Knowledge

In first grade, instruction focused on identifying the text features of the front cover, title page, illustrations/photographs, fonts, glossary, and table of contents. These features were used in explaining the relationship between the text and the text features.

Subsequent Knowledge

In third grade, students will continue to identify text features and use them to locate and acquire more information about a topic. Third graders will also identify timelines, maps, charts, and the appendix to locate information and gain meaning from text. These text features can be used in students' writing of informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic. Students will also learn to use information from multiple print and multimedia sources to develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details. They will learn as well to paraphrase and use original language to avoid plagiarism.

Instructional Strategies

Instructional Strategy: RAN Strategy (Stead, 2006)

Learning Targets:

- I can explain how an author uses illustrations and photographs help a reader learn new information. (2.RI.8.1)
- I can plan, revise, and edit my writing and strengthen writing on the ideas of others. (2.W.2.2)

Note:

The RAN strategy is a modification of the KWL chart. It includes five categories: What I Think I Know, Confirmed, Misconceptions, New Information, and Wonderings. The following explains the RAN strategy in the classroom: <http://safeshare.tv/v/ss571f789981d3a>; www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6Kg4sGAIYs; www.heinemann.com/shared/onlineresources/E02681/G1LessonBook_samplepages.pdf

*Misconceptions column is appropriate for older students or those with more writing experience.

Model (I do):

- Select an informational text that is from a specific topic or unit of study.
- Before reading the text, talk to students about what you are looking for when you read the book. Set a purpose to gather information e about a topic through word choice, sentence structure, illustrations and photographs.
- To begin, model for students *what you think you know* about the subject. Write what you know in the first column.
- Then explain to students how to move on to the next column as you think aloud those *confirmations* and *questions* that arise.
- Conduct an interactive read aloud, using think-alouds to model how to stop and record pertinent information on the RAN chart.

Guided Practice (We do):

- Repeat the same procedure above with an additional informational text.
- Continue asking, “Is there anything we can move from ‘What do you think you know?’ to ‘Yes, we were right?’ ” Allow students time to turn to a partner and discuss. Be sure to read and talk about information presented in text features, such as - illustrations, photographs etc.
- Once information is moved to “Yes, we were right,” focus students on new learning and ask them “What new information did we learn about _____?” Go back and reread the section or revisit the text features if necessary. Students should state where the author provided the new information, so that they don’t lean on background knowledge, but instead use information explicitly stated in the text.
- At the conclusion of the reading, ask students to reflect on the first three columns - what was confirmed, what was new learning.

- Ask students what they “wonder” after reflecting on the first three columns. Add their “wonderings” to the chart.

Independent Practice (You do):

- Students will use the RAN strategy on a topic of their choice, writing to fill in the blanks. This activity will help them plan their informational writing.
- The teacher will conduct independent writing conferences, document the results of the conferences, and provide scaffolding, as needed.
- The teacher will bring the students together in a large group to share items from their RAN chart.

Instructional Strategy: Look to Text Features (Serravallo, 2015)

Learning Targets:

- **I can use an index, headings, bullets, and captions to find information. (2.RI 8.2)**
- **I can explain how these features help me understand informational text. (2.RI 8.2)**
- **I can use write informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic, supply facts and definitions about the topic, and provide a concluding statement or section. (2.W.2.1)**

Note:

See [Hunting for Text Features](#) handout found in the Appendix.

Model (I do):

- Select a text from the topic or unit of study used in the previous lesson that contains text features (index, headings, bullets & captions).
- Before the lesson, create an anchor chart with text and pictures that outline specific text features students should already be familiar with (front cover, title page, table of contents, glossary, photographs and illustrations).
- Review the text features chart. Explain to the students that writers use text features to help readers better understand parts of the book and the text itself. Text features signal a reader to pay attention to parts of the text. Introduce the students to the concepts of *index*, *headings*, *bullets*, and *captions*.
- Model for students how to get information from these new text features.
- Write any new information on the text features chart and add pictures for easy reference for students.
- Model how to create and write these on a subject or topic of choice.

Guided Practice (We do):

- Select a text with the text features of *index*, *headings*, *bullets*, and *captions*.

- Support students as they look at the *index*, *headings*, *bullets*, and *captions* to determine new information about the topic.
- As an interactive writing activity, have the students to write new facts about the topic, and then support students in writing a sample with an *index*, *headings*, *bullets*, and *captions*.

Independent Practice (You do):

- Working independently, the students will select an informational text from their book baskets and write what they have learned from any text features on the chart (in the Resources section). They will also create an additional text features sample using an *index*, *headings*, *bullets*, and/or *captions*. The teacher can create a blank text features chart for the students to complete, using examples to keep as references for further inquiry.
- The teacher will conduct independent writing conferences, document the results of the conferences, and provide scaffolding, as needed.
- The teacher will bring the students together in a large group to share items from their text features discoveries and their sample text features.

** This lesson may be broken into individual lessons that teach each of the text features*

Instructional Strategy: Words and Phrases for Information

Learning Targets:

- **I can identify words and phrases used to provide information in a variety of texts. (2.RI.8.1)**
- **I can use write informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic, supply facts and definitions about the topic, and provide a concluding statement or section. (2.W.2.1)**

Model (I do):

- Select an informational text from the topic or unit of study from the previous lesson that contains a front cover, title page, illustrations or photographs, fonts, glossary, index, captions, headings, bullets, and a table of contents. Find information in the book to find information that leads to understanding an unfamiliar word.
- Review the text features chart and introduce *bold words*, *highlighted words*, and *italicized words*. Explain that writers often use these techniques to help the reader understand that these words are important.
- While reading aloud, focus on key words and phrases, and link any words to the glossary and the index as needed. Model for students how to get information by looking at specific words and phrases (bold words, highlighted words, italics or headings)
- Write any new information on a large text features chart.
- Explain that identifying text features helps the reader understand or comprehend the key details in a text.

Guided Practice (We do):

- Select a text with text features that have key words and details.
- Support students as they look for specific words and phrases to determine new information about the topic.
- As a shared writing activity, share the pen with the students to write new facts about the topic.

Independent Practice (You do):

- Working independently, the students will select an informational text from their individual book baskets and write what they have learned.
- The teacher will conduct independent writing conferences, document the results of the conferences, and provide scaffolding, as needed.
- Bring the students together in a large group to share items from their writing.

Instructional Strategy: Writing about Illustrations and Photographs**Learning Targets:**

- **I can find how an author uses illustrations and photographs to inform, explain and describe. (2.RI.8.2)**
- **I can explain how text features help me understand the relationship between the text features and the text. (2.RI.8.2)**
- **I can use informative texts that introduce a topic, supply facts and definitions about the topic, and provide a concluding statement or section. (2.W.2.1)**

Model (I do):

- Review the text features chart with the students.
- Explain that two other things are considered text features that guide a reader to new information.
- Show the students a photograph or an illustration.
- Thinking aloud, model how to write information gained from the photograph or illustration. Explain that good readers are constantly thinking about the text's central idea, while looking at the text features.
- Write down what information is gained through the pictures, illustrations and photographs on chart paper.

Guided Practice (We do):

- Select a text with text features that include illustrations/photographs. The topic or unit of study for this lesson should be used in subsequent lessons to provide continuity for the students.
- Show the students the teacher selected book, and have several students model how to look at the front cover, title page and the

illustrations/photographs and tell what information they acquired.

- Use think-alouds as a strategy if students are having difficulty understanding the importance of the photographs and illustrations. Be sure to discuss how the interaction with text sparks the reader's intellectual response to the topic.
- Now, have the students read the words and then look back at the pictures, illustrations or photographs.
- Have students write any new facts on a chart.

Independent Practice (You do):

- Working independently, the students will select an informational text from their individual book baskets and write what they have learned from the illustrations or the photographs.
- The teacher will conduct independent writing conferences, document the results of the conference, and provide scaffolding, as needed.
- The teacher will bring the students together in a large group to share items from their writing.

Instructional Strategy: Planning my Informative Writing

Learning Targets:

- **I can plan, revise, and edit my writing and strengthen writing on the ideas of others. (2.W.2.2)**
- **I can explain how text features help me understand the relationship between the text features and the text. (2.RI.8.2)**

Model (I do):

- Use your informational topic list to choose a topic to write about.
- Model how to choose an informational book to gain information and connect the relationship between the text features. Complete 1-3 sections of the RAN chart as the book is read aloud.
- Demonstrate how to plan writing an informational piece by using the planning document (sample RAN chart is in the Resources section of this unit).
- Explain that good writers plan before they write to help them write better.

Guided Practice (We do):

- Continue the procedure above, allowing the students to add and write any new information gained.
- Have the students turn and talk with a partner during the process.

Independent Practice (You do):

- Give each student a RAN chart, and have each student plan his or her writing. Those students who finish their planning may move on to drafting.
- Conduct independent writing conferences; document the results of the conferences, and provide scaffolding, as needed.
- Bring the students together in a large group to share items from their planning.

Note:

This activity may work more effectively in small groups with students who have chosen the same informational topic.

Instructional Strategy: Dash Notes (SCDE Literacy Initiatives, 2013)

Learning Target: I can use write informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic, supply facts and definitions about the topic, and provide a concluding statement or section. (2. W.2.1)

Model (I do):

- Locate a short video or video clip from a current unit of study.
- Explain to the students that good writers plan effective writing by taking notes from videos or texts to help them. Play the video, and model how to take Dash Notes on large chart paper as the video is playing (see the [Dash Notes](#) handout found in the Appendix.)

Guided Practice (We do):

- Give the students paper or sticky notes in order to use the Dash Notes strategy to write down important information from the reading.
- Read several pages from an informational text, pausing often to ask students to write down information they believe is important. Guide students as needed.
- Allow several students to share their notes.
- Repeat with additional pages from the text.

Independent Practice (You do):

- Distribute paper or sticky notes to the students. Have the students locate informational texts in their individual book baskets and write Dash Notes as they are reading.
- Conduct independent writing conferences; document the results of the conference, and provide scaffolding, as needed.
- Bring the students together in a large group to share items from their planning.

Learning Target: I can use write informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic, supply facts and definitions about the topic, and provide a concluding statement or section. (2.W.2.1)

Instructional Strategy: Facts and Definitions

Model (I do):

- Locate some informational texts that have *facts* and *definitions* as examples. Also locate some writing that needs definitions.
- Read the writing without definitions aloud to the students and think aloud as you say, “Something seems to be missing. What can I add to make me understand it better?” Model what a difference the writing would look like and sound like if the writer included definitions.
- Explain to the students that often informational writing needs facts and definitions to help the reader understand the topic better.
- Display a section of the text in front of the students. Read the text aloud, and model how to use the definitions to clarify meaning.
- Using a think aloud, model how the definitions relate to the facts and how they guide the reader’s learning.

Guided Practice (We do):

- The teacher will bring out an informational piece of writing that needs definitions to guide the reader.
- Students will read the text and then turn-and-talk to their partner to come up with words and the definitions that clarify them..
- Students will share their examples, and the teacher will guide the discussion.

Independent Practice (You do):

- Have the students use their written drafts to find places that need more facts and definitions.
- Conduct independent writing conferences; document the results of the conference, and provide scaffolding, as needed.
- Bring the students back together in a large group to share their revisions.

Instructional Strategy: Crafting an Introduction (Hurni-Dove, 2006)

Learning Targets:

- **I can write informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic, supply facts and definitions about the topic, and provide a concluding statement or section. (2.W.2.1)**
- **I can plan, revise, and edit my writing and strengthen my writing using the ideas of others. (2.W.2.2)**

Model (I do):

- Bring out the original RAN chart used to model how to plan writing.
- Explain that good writers have to capture the interest of the reader from the very beginning of the piece. This practice is called *creating a strong lead*. Most writers use several different techniques, such as *begin with a question*, *begin with dialogue*, *begin with action*. Create an anchor chart to assist students with types of leads and examples.
- Then conduct an interactive read aloud with a non-fiction or informational text that uses one of the techniques listed. Highlight the lead in this text.
- Model how to revise a simple introduction to make it better.

Guided Practice (We do):

- Write several other sample introductions on the board or on chart paper, and have the students revise the writing to construct a strong lead.

Independent Practice (You do):

- Have the students write a strong lead or revise their strong lead.
- Conduct independent writing conferences; document the results of the conference, and provide scaffolding as needed.
- Bring the students back together in a large group to share their introductions.

Instructional Strategy: Closing My Writing**Learning Targets:**

- **I can use write informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic, supply facts and definitions about the topic, and provide a concluding statement or section. (2.W.2.1)**
- **I can plan, revise, and edit my writing and strengthen my writing, using the ideas of others. (2.W.2.2)**

Model (I do):

- Re-visit one of the informational books read aloud from the unit, one that has a good concluding statement or paragraph.
- Briefly retell the concepts of the book, paying careful attention to the conclusion. Thinking aloud, talk about the introduction and the conclusion. Discuss how they relate to each other and how the conclusion reminds the reader about the interesting or important parts of the text. A chart could be used to outline and identify the introduction, facts and conclusion.
- Read a sample passage to the students that is missing a conclusion.

- Model how to re-read and provide a closing statement.

Guided Practice (We do):

- Using guided practice, show the students several copies of more informational writing.
- Working with the students, add a closing statement on the end of each piece.

Independent Practice (You do):

- The students will write independently and add a closing statement to their draft pieces.
- Those students who have finished drafting can then move on to editing and revising if these skills have previously been taught.
- The teacher will conduct independent writing conferences, document the results of the conference, and provide scaffolding, as needed.
- Bring the students together in a large group to discuss their writing.

Assessment Tasks

Teachers should create an assessment management system to evaluate each student's proficiency in skills and indicators. A qualitative rubric with descriptors, such as "meets expectations," "making progress toward expectations," and "needs additional support" should be constructed with colleagues so that expectations of mastery are consistent from classroom to classroom.

Summative Assessment:

Have students write an informational piece in book form on a topic chosen by the teacher. The student should be able to use mentor texts as information guides and writing guides. Assess students using the [Grade 2 informational Writing Rubric](#) found in the Appendix.

Formative Assessments:

(2.RI.8.1) and (2.RI.8.2)

1. Have the students go on a text feature hunt where they identify the text features in books and describe the important information acquired from each feature.
2. Use this as a checklist to ensure students are using text features to support their reading of the text. This checklist should not be used in isolation. It should be utilized in context to provide a better understanding of the content and authors' choices.
 - Words
 - Phrases
 - Illustrations
 - Front Cover

- Title Page
- Photographs
- Fonts
- Glossary
- Table of Contents

(2.W.2.1) and (2.W.2.2) Writing Informational Texts

1. Use a Writer’s Checklist with the students to help them assess their own informational writing. A [sample student writing checklist](#) is included in the Appendix.
2. Students can make a chart in their independent reading journals of informational texts they have read during shared, guided, or independent reading time. The chart should be based on their Reader’s Response Journals. Check to ensure that all books on the list are informational texts.

Resources

http://www.booksource.com/files/Lucy_UnitsofStudy.pdf

<http://writingfix.com/index.htm>

Lesson Plans on Text Features:

www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/learning-read-nonfiction-and-its-text-features

Text Features Rap

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8D6cq_-mV90

Mary Pope Osborne, author

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7kFwGLLW9Q>

Gail Gibbons, author

<http://www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/gibbons>

WritingFix: Quality Teaching Resources for K-12.

<http://writingfix.com/index.htm>

Informational Mentor Texts:

- *Dolphin Talk* by Wendy Pfeffer
- *Blast Off to Earth! A Look at Geography* by Loreen Leedy
- *Polar Bears in Danger* by Roberta Edwards
- *Ant Cities* by Arthur Dorros
- *Bats* by Gail Gibbons
- *Dogs* by Gail Gibbons
- *Owls* by Gail Gibbons
- *From Seed to Plant* by Gail Gibbons
- *Caves and Caverns* by Gail Gibbons
- *Birds and Their Nests* by Linda Tagliaferro
- *How a House Is Built* by Gail Gibbons
- *The Bicycle Book* by Gail Gibbons
- *How to Make Salsa* by Jamie Lucero
- *Let's Make Pancakes* by Emma Rossi
- *Making Ice Cream* by Jill McDougall
- *Bears* by Tracey Crawford
- *Fish* by Tracey Crawford
- *Frogs* by Tracey Crawford
- *All About Sharks* by Jim Arnosky
- *What Is Weather?* by Ellen Lawrence
- *Fruits* by Charlotte Guillian
- *Tigers* by Joann Early Macken
- *Squirrels* by Emily Rose Townsend
- *Tell Me, Tree: All About Trees For Kids* by Gail Gibbons

Hunting for Text Features

Informational texts to identify the text features and the information learned in each. Be sure to write the title of the book.

| Text Feature | Title of Book | What information did you learn? |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Table of Contents | | |
| Illustrations/ Photographs | | |
| Captions | | |
| Headings | | |
| Bullets | | |
| Index | | |

Mini Lesson: Dash Notes

In your research notebook, write the topic you are researching.

- * Ex. Pandas

Each time you read in a new book , write the title and author.

- * Ex. Giant Pandas by Gail Gibbons

When you find an interesting fact as you are reading, one that will add to your research, look away from the book.

- * Write just a few words to hold the facts. Put a dash in front of your “dash notes.”

- * Ex. –live in mountains of China

- * Add the page number (if available)

- * Ex. –lives in mountains of China –p. 3

- * Ex. –members of the bear family – p. 7

- * Ex. – thick, coarse, oily fur – p. 9

* When you are done reading the section or when you are ready to begin drafting that part, turn each dash note into a complete sentence. You may want to combine dash notes into a longer sentence.

- * Ex. Pandas, a member of the bear family, are found in the mountains of China. Their fur is very thick and oily.

Grade 2

Informational Writing Checklist



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| <input type="radio"/> | My writing has a title. |
| <input type="radio"/> | My writing has an introduction. |
| <input type="radio"/> | I have at least 3 facts. |
| <input type="radio"/> | I have included definitions. |
| <input type="radio"/> | I have included at least <u>two</u> text features. |
| <input type="radio"/> | My writing has a conclusion. |
| <input type="radio"/> | I spelled my words correctly. |
| <input type="radio"/> | I have capital letters at the beginning of my sentences and with proper nouns. |
| <input type="radio"/> | I have the correct punctuation. |
| <input type="radio"/> | I wrote neatly so others can read it. |
| <input type="radio"/> | I did my best! |

INFORMATIONAL/EXPLANATORY TEXT-BASED WRITING RUBRIC
GRADE 2

| SCORE | 4 Exceeds | 3 Meets | 2 Develops | 1 Begins |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Focus/Information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds skillfully to all parts of the prompt Demonstrates a strong understanding of topic/text(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to all parts of the prompt Demonstrates an understanding of topic/text(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to most parts of the prompt Demonstrates limited understanding of topic/text(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to some or no parts of the prompt Does not demonstrate understanding of topic/text |
| Organization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes ideas and information into paragraph structure using a clear topic sentence, facts/ definitions grouped by related information, and concluding sentence Uses effective linking words and phrases to connect ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes ideas and information into paragraph structure using a clear topic sentence, facts/ definitions, and concluding sentence Uses effective linking words to connect ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes ideas and information in an incomplete paragraph structure (e.g., missing conclusion) Attempts to use some simplistic linking words to connect ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes with no evidence of paragraph structure Uses no linking words |
| Support/Evidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops the topic skillfully with facts, definitions, and details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops the topic with facts and definitions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops the topic with limited facts and definitions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses few to no facts or definitions |
| Language- Conventions of Grammar and Usage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses verb tenses and plural nouns correctly, including irregular forms Produces correct simple, compound, and complex sentences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses verb tenses and plural nouns correctly, including some irregular forms (e.g., is/was; child/children) Produces correct simple and compound sentences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses some regular verb tenses and common plural nouns correctly Produces mostly correct and complete sentences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses verb tenses and plural nouns incorrectly Produces mostly incorrect sentences |
| Language – Conventions of Capitalization, Punctuation, and Spelling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalizes correctly and consistently with no errors: first word in a sentence, “I,” proper nouns, and titles Uses commas, apostrophes, and end punctuation correctly all the time Applies above grade-level spelling rules and patterns correctly, including irregular high-frequency words ; no errors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalizes correctly and consistently with a minor error: first word in a sentence, “I,” proper nouns, and titles Uses commas, apostrophes, and end punctuation correctly most of the time Applies grade-level spelling rules and patterns correctly (reference core sound/spelling resources); few to no errors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalizes correctly and consistently with some errors: first word in a sentence, “I,” proper nouns, and titles Uses commas, apostrophes, and end punctuation correctly some of the time Applies some grade-level spelling rules and patterns correctly; some errors and phonetic spelling interfere with readability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalizes incorrectly with many errors Uses commas, apostrophes, and end punctuation incorrectly or not at all Misapplies grade-level spelling rules through phonetic spelling; excessive errors interfere with readability |

Adapted from Elk Grove Unified School District in Elk Grove, California

Grade 2: Informational/Explanatory Writing
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